



US Forest Service

Rim Fire Recovery

Weekly Update

General Background:

Date: July 15, 2014

The Rim Fire started in August 2013 and eventually burned 257,314 acres, including 154,530 acres on the Stanislaus National Forest. Burned Area Emergency Response work to address immediate hazards has been completed with the exception of storm patrol and monitoring. The Stanislaus National Forest has produced:

1. An environmental assessment (EA) for hazard tree removal along 194 miles of high use Forest Service roads, administrative and recreation facilities, and areas adjacent to private infrastructure. The EA includes 10,315 acres of NFS lands, of which 8,986 acres are along roads. The Rim HT EA Decision Notice and Finding of No Significant Impact were signed on April 25, 2014. Implementing contracts for this project have been awarded.
2. A Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Rim Fire Recovery Project proposes to lessen the potential for future catastrophic fire by reducing the fuel loading and capture the perishable economic commodity value of the fire killed trees through timber salvage. The proposed DEIS includes work on 44,461 acres of NFS lands, of which 16,315 acres are along roads. The Draft EIS 30-day public comment period ended on June 16, 2014. The draft EIS is available online at http://www.fs.fed.us/nepa/nepa_project_exp.php?project=43033. A decision is scheduled for August 2014.

Update for the week of July 15, 2014:

Director:

- The first technical meeting on reforestation went well last week in Sacramento.
- Susan Skalski is retiring on Sept. 2. Jeanne Higgins, the Region 3 Dep. RF will be her permanent replacement.

NEPA Coordinator:

- The 5,588 draft EIS comments have been closely reviewed. 97% were form letters; 145 unique communications were also received.

ID Team Lead:

- Coordinating team members to maximize overall project goals.
- Responses for the EIS comments are still being formulated.

Engineering:

- \$324,000 was received from Capital Maintenance and Facilities to replace six restrooms burned in the fire at four different campgrounds. Interpretive signs for the Rim of the World overlook will also be purchased along with 30 bear boxes.

Partnership:

- A Passports in Time program, conducted by the local band of the Mi-Wuks was very informative.

Silviculture:

- Various external partners participated in the reforestation technical workshop held in Sacramento last week.
- Partners are being asked to create proposals based on current forestry trends.

Communications:

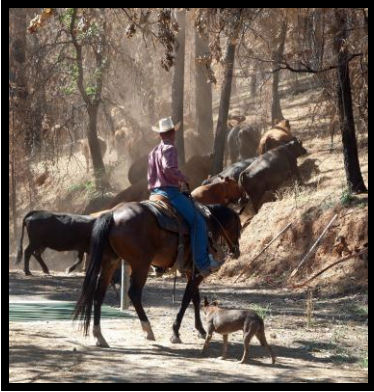
- From today's Tuolumne County Board of Supervisors meeting: there has been an 85% jump in timber receipts this year versus last.
- Next run of the Rim Fire Recovery Update newspaper is planned for July 24th.

Archaeology:

- A grant will assist students from the Tuolumne band of the Mi-Wuk tribe to work on marking crews.
- Additional help with flagging archaeology sites will be required next summer.

Issues:

- Addressing FEMA concerns and working with the response to comments.



On July 10th, 65 head of cattle were allowed to return to the lightly burned portions of the Rim Fire, on two grazing allotments. On-site monitoring by Forest Service rangeland managers detected that some areas were recovering sufficiently to allow cattle back in to graze. Several allotments are not yet back in rotation due to high intensity fire behavior and the resultant effects. Grazing may resume on these more heavily impacted sites in 2015.

Questions about Rim Fire Recovery efforts? Please contact:
Rim Fire Recovery Information (209) 432-3709.